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and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General

Report of Inspection

Embassy Hanoi
and Consulate General
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Report Number ISP-I-05-28A, September 2005

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KEY JUDGMENTS

- The U.S. relationship with Vietnam is undergoing bilateral developments that were unimaginable when the war ended in 1975. The U.S. embassy appears determined to help spur Vietnam's transformation, as indicated by the top ranking given to economic growth and development in the Mission Performance Plan (MPP). Nevertheless, Vietnamese distrust of the United States remains a lingering reality, notably in law enforcement cooperation.
- The Ambassador enjoys the respect of a country team that deserves to feel very proud of its extraordinarily productive performance. Weak spots identified by the inspection report should not detract from the overall accomplishments of the embassy, notably in the administrative and reporting arenas. Morale in Hanoi is generally satisfactory, but the pace of work wears on some officers.
- Consulate General at Ho Chi Minh City is well led and enjoys upbeat morale. Although the relationship between the embassy and consulate general has greatly improved from earlier years, the embassy requires a more proactive effort to integrate the consulate general into the country team.
- Vietnam-wide consular services require improved coordination, although most work is performed satisfactorily. Serious fraud problems led the Department of State (Department) to designate Vietnam as a high fraud location. Such fraud enormously complicates fiancé(e) visas, an expected adoption program, and the determination of refugee status.
- Replacement of the chancery dwarfs any other real property issues. The chancery is inadequate, overcrowded, and unsafe. For over two years, the Vietnamese government has been unable to secure the return of a Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO)-approved site controlled by the Russian government. Although Embassy Hanoi has recently shifted focus to other properties, it needs to elicit fuller Vietnamese government support for U.S. government efforts to acquire a site to replace the currently inadequate chancery.
- The valuable downtown property on which the American Club is located should be appraised and sold. The official American community uses the club infrequently, and it is unsound financially.

- The embassy's improper registration and operation of official vehicles should cease to avoid potential embarrassment to the U.S. government.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between April 4 and 29, 2005, and in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, between May 2 and June 1, 2005.

CONTEXT



Ten years after the establishment of U.S.-Vietnamese diplomatic relations, Vietnamese exports to the United States are booming, up \$4 billion in the last four years, a result in part of the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Agreement concluded in 2001. Boeing is about to finalize a sale of four 787's, the deal possibly to be signed as Prime Minister Phan Van Khai travels to Washington in June to meet with President Bush for the first such official visit ever by a ranking member of the

Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Two large U.S. insurance companies have just received preliminary licenses to practice in Vietnam. If the indirect investment of U.S. subsidiaries based in other Southeast Asian countries like Singapore were counted, the United States would be close to the top as a source of foreign investment in Vietnam, and this investment is growing. China is Vietnam's economic model for its combination of socialism and capitalism, but China is also an unwelcome economic competitor with the United States for influence in Southeast Asia.

The spirit of reconciliation towards the United States among most Vietnamese is striking. There are virtually no incidents of Americans being made to feel bad on the street. The pace of people to people programs and Fulbright exchanges is close to exhilarating. U.S. public diplomacy needs to be managed with great skill at such a favorable crux, especially given thorny issues such as Agent Orange, which the Vietnamese say is causing numerous birth defects.

Many Vietnamese do not want to challenge the communist legacy left them by their revered former chief, Ho Chi Minh. Vietnam is not prone to react well to being told what to do by the United States. This is not a defeated nation to which we might apply the balm of a Marshall Plan, but a country proud in victory.

That so many Vietnamese want internal reconciliation between north and south is even more remarkable than open-mindedness towards the United States. Part of this attitude is fueled by the material aspirations of the young in a very poor country, who long to forget wartime miseries and get on with life. They want trendy music, clothes, and motor scooters. Part of it is still the nationalist heritage of Ho Chi Minh, who died on the eve of American withdrawal but would have wanted to rebuild a unified country. Vietnamese know that the old ways will not create the jobs and prosperity they want. They have figured out that they can do it better with the United States than without it.

The U.S. mission in Vietnam comprises 97 Americans in Hanoi and 50 in Ho Chi Minh City. Total funding in FY 2004 was \$9.4 million. The FY 2005 target of OBO was \$3 million. Seven agencies are represented in Hanoi, three in Ho Chi Minh City. For FY 2005 total U.S. assistance from all agencies will be approximately \$65 million, with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief expected to receive \$27.6 million.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

A DYNAMIC, CHALLENGING RELATIONSHIP

While orthodox communism may be on the wane, Vietnam is very much a one party state, with the authoritarianism, bureaucracy, and paraphernalia of communism. Nevertheless, the ruling Communist Party now has its eyes set firmly on economic development. Undoubtedly, the party does not wish to risk being overwhelmed by a tide of young Vietnamese who are far more aware of Western notions than their elders. Over half of Vietnam's 82 million people are under age 25, and the young are a powerful force for change. Moreover, 1.5 million persons enter the labor market yearly, and after three decades of warfare and deprivation, the industrious Vietnamese want jobs and prosperity. Maintaining continued political stability demands that the government provide them.



Hanoi US Navy

The United States is very much part of a Vietnamese economic equation accepting bilateral developments unimaginable when the war ended in 1975. The U.S. Embassy champions the benefits of a new relationship and appears determined to help spur Vietnam's transformation, as indicated by the top ranking given to economic growth and development in the MPP. Nevertheless, Vietnamese distrust of the United States remains a lingering reality. Hanoi is moving gingerly in its bilateral military ties, emitting mixed signals on Agent Orange cooperation, acting uninterested in serious law enforcement collaboration, and not effectively supporting embassy efforts to secure land for a new chancery.

EMBASSY LEADERSHIP

The U.S. embassy is headed by a career Foreign Service officer with an established reputation for hard work. In a scant seven months, he has put in place the mechanisms for a major HIV/AIDS program in Vietnam, leveraged trade agreements into human rights reform, and galvanized an ambitious public affairs campaign to try to replace distrust with the promise of mutually beneficial relations. The Ambassador enjoys the respect of a mission that deserves to feel very proud of its extraordinarily productive performance.

There is also no question that the Ambassador is a detail-oriented, hard driving executive who taxes the energy of a mission located in an overcrowded, ill-suited facility that cries for replacement. Morale is already mixed in this difficult environment that offers few escapes, morale suffers further among officers who may not be up to the workload pace or intensive front office scrutiny. The knowledgeable, well-liked deputy chief of mission (DCM) is not a source of pressure but needs to be more of an overseer of the Ambassador's requirements.

The Ambassador is taking overdue action to relieve a major source of work stress: the chancery. Property issues are reviewed under Resource Management. Resolution of these problems stands squarely in the way of good management and the promotion of U.S. interests by an overtaxed staff.

To relieve the pressure, the tempo of the bilateral relationship might be slowed to take into account the work capacity of a mission going at full throttle. On the other hand, the United States would not want to miss the opportunity in a country undergoing an economic transformation, a country that can serve as a counterweight to possible Chinese ambitions in the region. The Department appears to understand both the pressure on the post and the importance of its work. In a year when increases in personnel are virtually unobtainable, embassy Hanoi received four new positions. These positions will help significantly, but as they benefit from the workforce increase, the embassy's section heads will need to perform at a high level and be held accountable for results. Mid-level personnel in a few sections are bearing the brunt of supervisory level weaknesses (noted elsewhere in this report). Embassy sections are reviewed in the next chapter of this report.

The Ambassador needs to reorganize his front office so that the DCM and office management specialist (OMS) serve him and the mission better. The front office is not administered optimally and is too much a one-person show: the Ambassador. In rethinking the role of the front office, the Ambassador needs to question his own voluminous demand for written work, his tendency to rewrite

material, his somewhat intrusive oversight of mid-level managers, and his tendency to be his own DCM. The latter needs to be empowered to manage more effectively, perhaps with areas fenced off for his, rather than the Ambassador's, decisionmaking. Too much goes to the Ambassador. An informal recommendation calls for the review of front office operations. The projected services of an eligible family member (EFM) to backup the two current front office OMSes, who are working too much overtime, would also bring badly needed relief and, perhaps, skills. Computer training should be provided to front office OMSes, if not all OMSes, to enhance their productivity. This was also recommended informally.

Security

Vietnam is a reasonably safe place for Americans. Traffic accidents, rather than crime, are the primary safety concern. Service in a communist country entails its own requirements, however, and the embassy is attentive to good internal security practices. Post management has actively supported the regional security officer and finally secured assignment of an assistant regional security officer and OMS to what has been an overburdened office. A separate, classified report addresses security issues in greater depth.

REVAMPING THE MISSION PERFORMANCE PLAN

Soon after his arrival, the Ambassador engaged his mission in a five-year review of staffing, followed by a mission-wide debate on what the principal MPP goals should be. As a result of this debate, he reversed some of his own initial ideas about the priorities and accepted countervailing opinions. For example, Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City suggested raising the priority of economic development and, separately, trade and investment. Both goals received subsequent prominence in the final MPP. As a further result, the earlier goal of regional stability, in which the United States could not realistically expect Vietnam to play a significant interactive role as friend and ally, dropped back considerably and was subsumed under mutual understanding. The Ambassador assigned the various agencies and sections to write summaries justifying the seven goals, in some cases assigning the same goal to more than one office and taking the best out of each paper in consultation. The thorough revision might have been facilitated by an even more freewheeling discussion among participants and less layered memoranda production.

The MPP lays out policy priorities very clearly and will undoubtedly serve as a tool for the Ambassador to measure post performance. Some agency heads ques-

tioned whether their investment in time would be commensurate with the seriousness with which the Department and post management would view the plan. The first results demonstrated the credibility of the MPP when the Department approved four new positions: a political/human rights officer, a much needed OMS for the security office, and two entry-level officer positions in Ho Chi Minh City. The MPP exercise will also be the basis for justifying NSDD-38¹ requests for staffing priorities of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Defense attaché office (Defense) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The Ambassador intends to tie employee work requirements to MPP objectives.

Economic growth and development heads the list of policy priorities, followed by democracy and human rights, global health, mutual understanding, trade and investment, visa and refugee adjudication, and management and organizational excellence. These priorities are expanded upon in the body of this report.

The MPP may suffer from an over abundance of detailed performance indicators, but they appear to suit the Ambassador's style of management. Several additional "local goal papers" are to focus on a variety of issues, including law enforcement, security, and human resources needs.

STRONG COUNTRY TEAM OVERSIGHT

The Ambassador requires that country team agencies keep him fully informed of their activities via a weekly activities report and periodic meetings. Most agencies have responded well to close scrutiny, discovering that it helps them organize their own work. Nevertheless, the Ambassador's questioning of travel and training opportunities, even when funding is provided by an agency other than the Department, rankles somewhat, suggesting a lack of trust in experienced supervisors. The Ambassador has called for training and travel plans, but he feels strongly that cost effectiveness, and embassy Hanoi's self interest should come first. It irritates post management, for example, that costly Vienna is used as a training site for East Asia and Pacific posts.

¹ National Security Decision Directive 38, Staffing at Diplomatic Missions and Their Constituent Posts, issued on June 2, 1982, assigns ambassadors the authority and responsibility to determine the appropriate size, composition, and mandate of all staffing operating under their authority.

The Military Relationship

Four American personnel serve in what is one of the embassy's busiest, most productive offices. The office handles a stream of VIP visits, ship visits, incipient military assistance and possible training program, humanitarian demining assistance, and the overall U.S. military fascination with Vietnam. In a major success, Defense secured blanket overflight clearances for U.S. aircraft assisting the region after the 2004 tsunami. Although the defense attaché did not complain, it is evident his office is stretched tautly and appears to require a security assistance officer if the military relationship is to progress further.

Detachment Two is one of three forward operational deployments based in Southeast Asia and is a subordinate unit of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, which falls under the operational umbrella of the U.S. Pacific Command based in Hawaii. Currently headed by an Army lieutenant colonel, Detachment Two was the first U.S. presence established in Vietnam, prior to the normalization of any bilateral agreements and the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Vietnam. The purpose of the Hanoi-based office since its inception 13 years ago has been to find the whereabouts or remains of U.S. service personnel lost in the war. As of June 2005, 1,397 are unaccounted for in Vietnam, 375 in Laos, 55 in Cambodia, and seven in the territorial waters of China. Detachment Two conducts year-round combined investigations, recoveries, research, and analysis throughout Vietnam using, among others, forensic anthropologists and experts in mortuary science. Cooperation from the Vietnamese has been generally excellent.

Trade and Development

Bilateral trade has grown to \$6 billion in the past few years, with the 2001 Bilateral Trade Agreement fostering even further growth. The lopsided trade balance favors Vietnam with over \$5 billion primarily in garment, seafood, and furniture exports to the United States. Agricultural products are the leading U.S. export, but a recently concluded sale of Boeing aircraft promises to increase sharply the current level of \$1.1 billion in American sales to Vietnam.

Department of Commerce offices in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, with a total of four American officers (although one position is not yet filled), foster growing bilateral trade. Half of U.S. exports are agricultural, largely cotton and lumber, with growing prospects for grain sales. One officer in Hanoi represents the Foreign Agricultural Service.

The Bilateral Trade Agreement and Vietnam's accession to the World Trade Organization are strong, mutual goals. USAID plays a leading role among all other donors in advising Vietnam on the modernization of its business codes, a technical assistance effort for those activities running at about \$4 million yearly.

USAID has just moved into modern facilities, where 18 Vietnamese and seven American officers support programs promoting economic growth and containing and relieving HIV/AIDS (see below). Its disability assistance, originally focused on victims of war and disaster, can now be used for all forms of disabilities (about \$3.5 million yearly). Another focus is environmental assistance (approximately \$1 million).

Critical Health Cooperation

An embassy officer described Vietnam as “a petri dish for infectious diseases.” Another explained that dengue fever, avian influenza, Japanese encephalitis, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis are among the diseases making the country critical in epidemiological terms. With perhaps 60,000 new cases of tuberculosis per year, sharply rising rates of HIV/AIDS as the disease moves from needle-driven propagation into the general population, and the country's position as an epicenter of bird influenza, the United States places a premium on health cooperation in Vietnam. The Department of Health and Human Services is represented by an attaché, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are expanding from two to four American employees and 15 to 20 Vietnamese employees.

In 2004, Vietnam became the only Asian “focus” country in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, a 5-year \$15 billion program that included \$27.6 million for U.S. government agencies in Vietnam for 2005. The program combines the efforts of USAID and Departments of State, Health and Human Services (including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), Defense and Labor in helping to prevent and treat the disease in Vietnam. USAID and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention administer most of the funding. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief absorbed the overall mission's energy in 2005, as mechanisms were established to conduct health programs, and it was one of the primary factors in the embassy's request for the assignment of an environment, science, technology and health officer, as discussed elsewhere in the report.

Important to mutual understanding, the Department of Health and Human Services attaché grasps the controversy over the use of Agent Orange (a defoliant) during the Vietnam War and has been working actively, though unsuccessfully, to improve Vietnam's scientific understanding of what health conditions Agent

Orange can cause, including birth defects in children. For the moment, it appears to serve Vietnam's interests to blame Agent Orange and not its environmental practices for some of the medical conditions affecting the country's children.

Embassy Hanoi should be more forceful in developing public guidance for American officers to use in explaining Agent Orange. It does little good to promote a Vietnam-wide speakers' program and have no current guidance on Agent Orange for participants, many of whom are first-tour officers. OIG made a recommendation on this in the public affairs section of this report.

Unsatisfactory Law Enforcement Cooperation

Vietnamese distrust and a consequent lack of cooperation mark U.S. law enforcement relations with Vietnam. As relations strengthen, the embassy will have to assign a higher priority to law enforcement cooperation, a subject covered under mutual understanding and human rights in the MPP. The mission is developing a "local goal paper" devoted to law enforcement, but it remains in the drafting stage. Vietnam must move more responsibly against money laundering if it is to establish acceptable banking practices within the Bilateral Trade Agreement and eventually the World Trade Organization.

The United States wants Vietnam to secure its borders against heroin, opium, and synthetic drug trafficking from Laos and Cambodia and to combat money-laundering emanating from Vietnamese-American traffickers in the United States. The United States also seeks Vietnamese cooperation in combating international terrorism and transnational crime.

So far, the Drug Enforcement Administration, with three American employees located in Hanoi, has had a difficult time in Vietnam, although it has been able to facilitate some counternarcotics training. A Federal Bureau of Investigation regional legal attaché covers Vietnam from Bangkok.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is located in Ho Chi Minh City, the site of most of its activities. Two DHS law enforcement officers seek to counter international terrorism and a wide variety of crimes, including money laundering, illegal trafficking in persons, and various forms of fraud. Vietnam provides almost no prosecutorial assistance, not even in cases involving baby trafficking or pedophilia. Counterterrorism cooperation remains to be established, and to the extent it exists, appears to be characterized by one-way communication. The two incumbents are officials of the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement under DHS. A third DHS officer will soon focus on citizenship and immigration issues.

The Ambassador has reestablished a law enforcement coordination mechanism to improve one of the weakest aspects of bilateral relations. The regional security office, with its own investigative obstacles in Vietnam, would be a member of any law enforcement grouping.

WELL-LED CONSULATE GENERAL HO CHI MINH CITY

Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, spearheads Vietnam's economic renaissance. It is the transportation nerve center of the country and the hub of significant economic activity. The industries, the shipping conglomerates, the farms, the banks, in short the investors in Vietnam's economic future, are there. Ho Chi Minh City has an attractive American consulate general with the sixth largest immigrant visa (IV) and largest fiancé(e) visa program in the world. At the time of the inspection, there were three agencies in addition to the Department located in Ho Chi Minh City. DHS has three American positions; the Foreign Commercial Service employs two Americans; and Foreign Service nationals (FSNs) cover the Foreign Agricultural Service. The Department has 37 American officers, and overall, the post has 226 FSNs. The FY 2005 funding for program, International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS), and DS is estimated at \$4.1 million.

Two excellent officers lead the consulate general, and upbeat morale is evident among American and Vietnamese employees. The front office pays considerable attention to the development of entry-level officers, meeting with them as a group every six weeks or so, bringing them into representational functions, sending them out as speakers, and providing them with out-of-cone experience, such as opportunities for political reporting. The consul general provides firm direction to his staff for harvesting trade and business opportunities, supporting the Department's economic policy initiatives, and encouraging economic and political reform. He oversees a large consular section beset by serious visa, fiancée, and adoption fraud.

Vietnam fought a civil war to eliminate internal political divisions, but an economic and psychological gulf still divides the more prosperous south from the rapidly developing North. Unfortunately, regional rivalries and perspectives too often creep into embassy-consulate general relations. In years past this led to an unhealthy rivalry and resentment between the two American posts. Recently, both posts have been working together more productively. Nevertheless, the Ambassador agreed with the Office of Inspector General (OIG) that the embassy requires a more proactive effort to better integrate Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City into the country team. The Ambassador announced his intention of requiring the

presence of the consul general on a more frequent basis to attend restricted briefings on national issues and to enhance his post's relationships with embassy sections. The very articulate consul general has much to contribute, and both posts should benefit from the exchanges. Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City need effectively to step up current efforts intended to establish rapport and synergies among Americans and FSNs at both posts.

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Policy and program implementation are efficiently managed at Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City under the Ambassador's oversight, subject to some variation in performance by section and the need for additional professional exchange between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City discussed under Executive Direction.

REPORTING

A spectrum of Washington readers found economic and political reporting from Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City well sourced and timely. It enabled policymakers to make sound decisions about Vietnam, especially in the areas of normalization of relations, human rights, religious freedom, and trade. These issues created strong demand for reporting by analysts in Washington, reflecting Congressional interest.

Hanoi's economic section comprises five positions. One, for financial reporting, will be filled when the selected officer completes a year of language training. Another was created for an entry-level officer on a one-time basis, and this officer too is now in language training. The political section has four political-officer positions, including a long-vacant one. The Department has just created a fifth position for internal politics and human rights. The Ambassador is seeking a position for science and technology, included as a request in the MPP, but he intends to establish this position in a new, separate section, with the incumbent reporting to the DCM.

Knowledgeable, conscientious officers lead both the economic and the political sections. Their styles differ, but both get the job done well. The economic section has experienced some interpersonal disharmony and is somewhat less well managed, but not so much as to obstruct a very fine product. It has been seriously understaffed because of unfilled positions, and the economic counselor has had to fill in to cover substantive portfolios. Both sections have reporting and travel plans, largely fulfilled, and both represent well, as do the reporting sections in Ho Chi Minh City.

Strong reporting and operational support from Ho Chi Minh City enhanced and supplemented the work of Hanoi's economic and political sections. The consul general and his deputy backed up the consulate general's hard-pressed, one-officer political section, which was well mentored, as was the economic section. The consul general gives officers in the Ho Chi Minh City consular section the opportunity to rotate into the political section for brief periods, which they generally welcome. The two-officer economic section has by Washington testimony done some of the best reporting mission-wide on state-owned enterprises, industrial sectors, and minority economic development. The principal officer and his deputy need to contribute more reporting themselves.

Both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City have done an excellent job of tracking and pushing Vietnam's implementation of the U.S.-Vietnamese bilateral trade agreement and encouraging Vietnam's adherence to standards for entrance into the World Trade Organization. Both posts need to persevere more in pursuit of information on internal political developments and should invigorate the biographic reporting program.

The exacting Ambassador may need to strengthen the frequency and degree of his positive reinforcement, if it is to match the excellent performance of the reporting officers and morale is to be maintained. Another adverse morale factor is the uneven nature of feedback from the Department. The posts cannot function at top efficiency unless they are getting reaction, good or bad. They also need policy guidance and timely advice on possible changes in emphasis if they are to stay abreast of thinking on sensitive subjects.

LANGUAGE TRAINING

The inadequacy of the Department's Vietnamese language training program affects the mission's ability to function optimally. Dissatisfaction with language training before arrival in country is widespread at both posts. Most officers deem a proficiency rating of 3-3 by the Foreign Service Institute overly generous, and the acquired language seems to have a relatively short shelf life in Vietnam itself. Employees say the language as taught at the institute is rendered less useful for countrywide purposes because of the accent and linguistic peculiarities of the instructors, many of whom migrated exclusively from South Vietnam some time ago. A recent visit by the new Asian language director reassured the posts that overdue corrective steps may be underway.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The second strategic goal in the FY 2006 MPP is Universal Human Rights Standards. Religious freedom and human rights issues have impeded the improvement of U.S. relations with Vietnam and have overshadowed other aspects of the bilateral relationship. In September 2004, the Secretary of State designated Vietnam a “country of particular concern” for severe violations of religious freedom. Since then, slow, steady improvement in the situation including legal reforms has occurred. Such progress allowed the United States to negotiate a binding agreement with Vietnam during May 2005 eliminating the need to impose sanctions. Overall, the society is opening up and, as a part of this evolution, individual rights to practice religion are increasingly respected.

In Hanoi, one political officer devotes about 80 percent of his time to issues of religious freedom and human rights, mostly religious freedom. The officer reports on these matters about once a week. Though the Department’s human rights offices have shown great interest, there is little feedback from the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP).

Other human rights issues are more difficult and progress is slower. Embassy officers monitor the activities and arrests of a small group of antigovernment activists, stand outside the courts during their trials, and let the government of Vietnam know of U.S. support for free expression. In addition, the officers encourage and monitor worker rights and labor conditions. The government of Vietnam is concerned and working to eliminate the problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and children. Socioeconomic conditions adversely affect improvement. Added to these are the limited abilities of the police and armed forces and the extensive land borders with China and Cambodia, the primary destinations for Vietnamese victims of trafficking. The public affairs section has awarded grants over the past two years to Vietnamese groups working in the most affected areas to provide awareness training and vocational training to women. In addition, the groups are working with microcredit programs to create opportunities for poor women to borrow money for starting small business ventures. The United States also sponsored an international nongovernmental organization shelter for victims of trafficking repatriated from abroad. In Ho Chi Minh City, approximately 60 percent of the political section’s workload involves human rights, including the issue of religious freedom. U.S. advocacy groups sometimes make the situation more difficult as they pursue particular interests with little concern for improving overall relations with Vietnam.

The consulate general's political section regularly reports to the Department on religious and human rights issues. Catholics, Protestants, and Buddhists constitute the major religious groups in Vietnam. Catholics have the fewest problems with the host government, possibly because the church has been in the country since the seventeenth century. The government has the most problems with Protestants who have been in the country for about 100 years. They are active in the Central Highlands, a sensitive area, and the host government is suspicious of their separatist activities. Buddhists are the most numerous of the groups. One Buddhist group is not allowed to operate freely because it has an anticommunist agenda. Problems with it go beyond religious freedom.

The consulate general used to have clandestine meetings with house church pastors, usually Protestant. Last summer there was a major turnover of officers including the consul general. Post management, together with the political officer, evaluated the effect of clandestine meetings on the host government, which was generally aware of them. These officers decided that secret meetings built mistrust and stopped them. Now meetings with pastors are openly held, mostly at the consulate general. Credibility with the host government has improved and dialogue exists about specific cases.

In addition to analyzing and reporting on religious freedom and human rights, the Ho Chi Minh City political section tries to make positive changes in these areas. During the last six months, a noticeable improvement is apparent. The Central Highlands remain a difficult area because of their strategic location and the large percentage of ethnic minorities resident there, such as the Montagnards. The minorities supported the United States during the war, and some want a separate country. A large number have immigrated to the United States, become citizens, and exert political pressure. There is a delicate balance between legitimate issues of religious freedom and the separatist movement. Some have attempted to use religious freedom as a cover for pursuing independence.

Political dissent that calls for an end to communist rule is not allowed and has met with severe measures, usually prison sentences. The mission policy is to engage dissidents publicly. Officers both meet with and invite dissidents to events. Recently, the consul general invited several individuals who were released from prison to an event with visiting Congressional staff.

REFUGEE AFFAIRS

Working with the Department's refugee coordinator at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City, the Ambassador has been advocating sympathetic Vietnamese consideration of religious freedom and minority status questions that drive refugee issues. Congress has sought to help the remaining potential refugees who "through no fault of their own" were unable to apply before the September 30, 1994, cutoff date to obtain refugee status. Many of these were allied with the United States during the war. In some cases, potential applicants were unable to muster the bribe required at that time to get Vietnamese documentation. A Department initiative based on a reasoned cable from the embassy has reopened the orderly departure program begun in Bangkok in the late 1970's, whose authority was about to expire, under the new rubric of humanitarian resettlement.

Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City and the refugee coordinator have assisted in the adjudication of 13 "visa 93" follow-to-join cases. These visas are effectively for relatives of ethnic individuals who fled to Cambodia to avoid mistreatment in Vietnam. There are several hundred more cases pending passport issuance by provincial-level authorities.

As the wartime population ages, and more applicants for refugee status realize they cannot take their adult married children and their families with them, the refugee coordinator expects that at the expiry of the new program in two years, the number of inquiries about resettlement will have decreased. The same will be true of the repatriation of Amerasians parented by American citizens. Closure of the Amerasian program will require legislation. Amerasian issues are discussed further under consular operations.

The coordinator and his 29 locally employed staff (LES) require more active involvement by the embassy in solving or retiring complicated cases. He intends to travel more frequently to the embassy, because cooperation by the Vietnamese authorities is effected mostly in Hanoi.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Embassy Hanoi

The public affairs section in Hanoi, located in a leased property called the Rose Garden, conducts a full range of public diplomacy activities. It is managed un-

evenly. The outstanding Fulbright Program is the star effort, with the cultural side close behind pursuing successful exchange programs and facilitating impressive cultural performances. The information resource center (IRC) has increased its outreach activities and during the past year opened its facility to the public. Information activities, critical to the fulfillment of MPP goals, require attention.

Excellent coordination between Embassy Hanoi's public affairs section and that of Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City exists with contacts on a daily basis. The Hanoi section must pay more attention, however, to relationships with the embassy front office. For example, a review of front office taskers revealed missed deadlines. More and faster responsiveness is essential to support the Chief of Mission adequately. OIG informally recommended greater use of written memoranda to the front office, explaining the reasons for actions and requests in order to smooth coordination and achieve better understanding.

Resources

A public affairs officer and an assistant public affairs officer lead a section with ten FSNs. The FSNs each have a backup person who received on the job training to ensure responsibilities are carried out during absences. An employee of the Institute for International Education is also working with the section as a contractor on Fulbright matters. The staffing size is inadequate to accomplish mission goals and objectives. As described in the information section below, one additional Foreign Service officer and one FSN are needed. In addition, the timely replacement of the assistant public affairs officer who will depart in the summer of 2006 is essential.

For FY 2005, public affairs has a country-wide budget of about \$550,000, with country-wide FSN salaries reaching approximately \$219,000; Hanoi program funds, \$202,000; and Ho Chi Minh City program funds, \$129,000. The section was allocated representation funds of about \$10,000 for the country - \$6,000 for Hanoi and \$4,000 for Ho Chi Minh City.

Some of the FSNs lack initiative and require American direction to accomplish their responsibilities. Training, therefore, is essential for FSNs at all levels to strengthen their abilities to carry out individual responsibilities. The assistant public affairs officer departs post during the summer of 2006. The effectiveness of public diplomacy at the mission will be crippled if the assistant public affairs officer is not replaced promptly.

Information Section

Information activities are too often reactive and fail to get ahead of topics. The public affairs officer and one FSN constitute the entire information staff. The officer has many other responsibilities preventing him from carrying out the full range of activities and must rely to a great extent on the information assistant. The FSN focuses on translating documents, which takes up most of his time. There is insufficient contact with the local media. The section lacks clear talking points and fact sheets on relevant issues providing guidance for speakers. In addition, the section doesn't have a plan of action to meet future needs.

The FY 2006 and FY 2007 MPPs include requests for an information officer. OIG agrees that the position is required to accomplish MPP goals. The incumbent would serve as press spokesman and expand media contacts. After discussions with two American officers and a review of information advocacy, OIG determined that one additional FSN position is needed. Such a position would provide depth for the local information staff and enable it to be proactive.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Hanoi should create an additional locally employed position to assist with information advocacy in the public affairs section. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Some elements of the U.S. Mission maintain that the public affairs section has not provided sufficient guidance to mission personnel on the subject of Agent Orange. Such guidance is especially important because the Vietnamese media continuously bring up the subject and condemn the United States for alleged harm to its population from the U.S. spraying of Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. Most officers have little idea how to cope with the issue. Ignoring it encourages the local media to publicize the worst possible scenario. Speakers, in particular, need material on key policy issues, including Agent Orange.

EAP states that it has sent guidance to the mission and that the guidance has remained essentially the same for the past year. EAP speculates that the guidance may not have been distributed widely enough at the mission. Under any circumstances, this situation is unacceptable.

Recommendation 2: Embassy Hanoi should ask for confirmation from the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs that the mission has the latest press and speaking guidance on Agent Orange, coordinate with the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the development of any additional guidance needed, and distribute the guidance widely throughout the mission. (Action: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with EAP)

The Public affairs section has instituted a promising Reach Out America Program that provides mission officers as speakers to interested groups, primarily schools and universities. This excellent program has successfully increased outreach and has spread the U.S. message to youthful audiences.

Work Requirements Statements

Articulating the U.S. message to Vietnam is an essential part of Embassy Hanoi's mission. The Ambassador strongly supports public diplomacy, and the public affairs section has urged everyone at post to participate in public diplomacy. Public affairs has suggested including a public diplomacy element in work requirements statements. Officers would then have more incentive for action. Worthwhile areas include press interviews, videoconferences, coordinating press releases for hosted events and visitors, submitting nominations for the exchange programs, and introducing contacts to the IRC. OIG informally recommended that the embassy add a public diplomacy element to work requirements statements.

The IRC does not have enough space to operate effectively. It is squashed in a hallway with four FSNs sitting in cramped areas and no space between the staff and visitors. There is little room for visitors to sit at nine computer monitors for their use positioned back-to-back, side-by-side. The center has inadequate bookshelves to display the collection and no space for more books.

The IRC is an integral part of public affairs outreach to targeted audiences: academics, officials, journalists, and students. It is open to the public and receives over 200 visitors per month. Many come to do research, use the Internet, ask about scholarship opportunities such as the Fulbright and Humphreys, and seek general information about the United States. Classes are a weekly event featuring how to use research tools on the Internet, write a curriculum vitae, and make presentations. The staff also prepares and disseminates a weekly newsletter to 800 contacts.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Hanoi should move the information resource center into larger space more appropriate for carrying out its mission. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

American Corners/Mobile Libraries

Much more limited than American Corners (explained below), mobile libraries are successful in expanding outreach beyond both the posts' small IRCs. The public affairs section at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City created, and Embassy Hanoi embraced, mobile libraries in 2001. There are now 10 in cities throughout the South and 12 in the North. Located in universities, public libraries, and at facilities of nongovernmental organizations, they are moved every six to 12 months to new sites. The collections are usually thematically based; e.g., environmental science, English teaching, economics, and trade. Mobile libraries, though not as effective as American Corners, have been a useful temporary device for outreach pending the establishment of more American Corners.

American Corners are partnerships with local institutions willing to provide space. So far there is only one in Vietnam because the communist government has been slow to authorize them. Often located outside capital cities, American Corners bring a stronger American presence to those with limited or no exposure to American culture or ideals. They constitute a dynamic new public diplomacy tool with books, magazines, and databases from and about the United States. The corners also provide programming space that can be used for speakers or other activities.

The public affairs section at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City established the first American Corner in Vietnam in Danang in February 2004 with about 1,000 books, 40 periodicals, computer equipment, and a meeting room supervised by three local university staff. It is unquestionably a success.

Both Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City are attempting to establish additional American Corners in Vietnam. As noted, due to the political situation, it is difficult to obtain the necessary approvals from multiple parts of the host government. Yet, the great benefits to be gained are worth the mission's commendable efforts.

Contacts Management

Contacts management is unacceptably dispersed with different elements of the public affairs section using four separate databases/systems to track contacts and to provide information and reports. The four are: the Distribution Records System, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Access, and FileMaker Professional 7. The Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM) has not approved the latter for the OpenNet. Recognizing this, users have installed FileMaker on stand-alone laptops. This also is not allowed. The section needs to integrate all of its contact records into one unified database accessible to the entire staff. Furthermore, the database selected must be approved by the Department's IRM. The present situation occurred because the former U.S. Information Agency's Distribution Records System is antiquated and no longer supported by IRM. No replacement was mandated.

Embassy Hanoi has already purchased the IRM approved software, GoldMine, which is in the possession of the information technology staff. GoldMine is a sophisticated tool capable of manipulating data and providing many types of reports. However, the use of GoldMine is not self-evident and does require training. OIG informally recommended the installation of GoldMine and training in its use.

Records Retention

The public affairs section has retained most of its paper files since it was established on the opening of the embassy in 1995. Many of these documents are no longer used or needed. Section staff has not reviewed the files, identified unused records, and archived or disposed of them in accordance with 5 FAM 430. The space occupied by unused documents can be put to better use. OIG made an informal recommendation to address these issues.

Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City

The public affairs section at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City is innovative and effective. It successfully conducts a full range of public diplomacy activities that reaches large audiences, including young people. Media relations are generally positive, allowing the section to get out the U.S. message and place material. An experienced public affairs officer heads the section, supported by an entry-level officer in a rotational slot and seven LES positions. The local staff is motivated and displays initiative. As noted, for FY 2005 Embassy Hanoi has allocated approximately \$129,000 for section programs and activities and about \$4,000 for representation.

The support provided by the entry-level officer is essential to the continued effectiveness of the section. The FY 2006 and 2007 MPPs include requests for making the position permanent along with strong justifications. Excellent coordination with Embassy Hanoi's public affairs section exists with contacts on a daily basis. In addition, the consul general is supportive of public diplomacy activities.

Space

Inadequate space is a problem for the section. It is difficult for the public to find on an upper floor in a rented building. A complicating factor is that only one elevator reaches public affairs and the guards watch who is waiting for it. No programming area is available for public affairs, which adversely affects section activities. Although in some countries it is possible to rent easily or even obtain complimentary use of outside venues, that is not the case in Vietnam. Three different host government offices must provide approval to hold a program at an outside venue. Obtaining permission from each of these offices is difficult and not always forthcoming. The consul general has suggested constructing a stand-alone facility on the present grounds of the consulate general. If feasible, this is one solution that deserves consideration.

The section shares its limited space with the Institute for International Education, a grantee of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. It has a staff of two who provide student counseling. This situation occurred because the host government had restrictions on nongovernmental organizations, requiring them to have their offices in Hanoi. They were unable to establish an independent office outside the capital. Except for space pressures, the collocation is working well. Students coming for advice often stay and visit the IRC.

Recommendation 4: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should relocate the public affairs section at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City to a site with sufficient space for programming activities and more readily accessible to the public. (Action: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with OBO)

American Corners/Mobile Libraries

As discussed earlier in the Embassy Hanoi public affairs part of this report, the public affairs section at the consulate general established the mobile library concept and the first American Corner in Vietnam in Danang. The section received two

requests for American Corners in other parts of the consular district and is aware of several other possible locations. An informal recommendation included in the prior discussion covers pursuing these opportunities.

Webmaster

The consulate general webmaster lacks the capability for proper web site design and management. Embassy Hanoi denied a request for the employee to take a course out of country to develop these skills. The section is pursuing the possibilities for other courses. Adequate training is vital for the employee to perform his key outreach responsibilities effectively. OIG informally recommended that Embassy Hanoi provide appropriate training for the public affairs section webmaster.

Broadcasting Board of Governors

The International Broadcasting Bureau's (IBB) Bangkok marketing office conducted successful production and reporting training for 25 reporters from five television stations in the Mekong Delta during May 2005. The training is the first of its kind in Vietnam and is the culmination of three years of contact work. IBB provided all funding for the training and consulted with the public affairs sections in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City throughout the preparation and training process. FSNs from both the embassy and the consulate general attended and assisted with the training.

TRADE PROMOTION AND INVESTMENT FACILITATION

The reporting and operational activities of Department officers at both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City are integrated into the trade promotion and investment facilitation efforts of the Foreign Commercial Service and the Foreign Agricultural Service. The Ambassador has raised the level of the mission's overall consciousness and involvement in commercial promotion. He gives frequent speeches in support of U.S. business, participates in business conferences in Vietnam and the United States, visits plants, and advocates U.S. sales.

In addition to the recent Boeing sale, a typical example of commercial success at both posts was getting the production cap lifted for a U.S. oil company helping to modernize Vietnam's \$5.6 billion oil and gas sector.

OIG found that U.S. economic and commercial goals in Vietnam could be advanced by a greater integration of FSNs not only within the official American community but also with each other across section, agency, and post lines. The Ambassador presided over an in-house, off-site political conference with American and FSNs that achieved a camaraderie still spoken of warmly by the FSN participants. The same result should be achievable among the more widely dispersed FSNs working on economic, trade, development, and health matters. OIG made an information recommendation on this. The embassy had to delay the economic off-site for budgetary reasons.

The four economic FSNs working at the chancery told OIG they hardly know the FSNs at the Foreign Commercial Service and the Foreign Agricultural Service only a few blocks away and said they were eager for a more cooperative approach to their respective labors. Except for one or two personal friendships, the same unfamiliarity exists in Ho Chi Minh City.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ambassador has requested an environment, science, technology and health position to be located in a separate section reporting to the DCM. In the absence of a position, some science and technology reporting has fallen by default to the Foreign Commercial Service, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Foreign Agricultural Service. OIG sees merit in the request but cautions that it will be very difficult to house such an officer in the already overcrowded chancery.

As envisaged, the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator would fund 60 percent of the environment, science, technology, and health officer position with a view to supporting the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Because the ramifications of science and technology on trade and investment are important, the environment, science, technology and health officer should effect as wide a liaison as possible with the entire science and technology community in Vietnam.

CONSULAR OPERATIONS

Overview

Statutory consular objectives include serving and protecting American citizens, their interests, and safeguarding American borders. Consular matters in Vietnam

run a wide and challenging gamut. Embassy Hanoi engages the government of Vietnam on several major consular policy issues, and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City has the largest fiancé(e) visa and the sixth largest IV operation worldwide. The MPP includes explicit consular goals and objectives. Overall, OIG found highly competent consular functional performance in the mission.

Generally speaking, consular staff displays positive morale. In Hanoi, consular section staff includes two mid-level Foreign Service officers, four LES, and one EFM. Embassy Hanoi consular staff expressed confidence in their supervisors' managerial skills, functional knowledge, and willingness to share information. Seventeen Foreign Service officers and 51 LES work in the Ho Chi Minh City section. They lauded their managers' professional knowledge and willingness to share information but expressed concern over "big picture" section direction and management. Staffers cited, for example, organizational uncertainties in staffing and scheduling rotational assignments within and outside the consular section as well as unclear operational direction. Additional training and mentoring would upgrade skills. The consular chief stated that he plans to improve section planning and organization. The consul general and deputy principal officer also need to be involved in this process. OIG made an informal recommendation on this.

The consular sections and other mission elements enjoy constructive relationships. Position descriptions are accurate and efficiency reports completed on time. Consular managers encourage employees to enhance job-related proficiencies through training, including English language courses and distance-learning consular studies offered by the Foreign Service Institute. Consular pages provide accurate, timely information on the embassy Internet site. The consular section in Hanoi possesses liberal office and public space. Public space in the Ho Chi Minh City section is adequate but staff work and interview areas are crowded

A consular management assistance team visited Vietnam in early 2005 and offered formal and informal suggestions for improving services. The consular section chiefs implemented many of these ideas, which have proven useful. OIG concurs with the consular management assistance team's recommendation that both consular officer positions in Hanoi stay classified as mid-level, based on policy and functional continuity and complexities. The embassy believes that one mid-level and one entry-level officer is the most appropriate staffing configuration for its Hanoi consular section.

The current MPP and consular package seek an additional officer and four more LES positions for Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's visa section. Inspection time constraints limited OIG's ability to analyze this request, but observation

strongly suggests that the section underestimated its needs. It appears very likely that at least the requested positions are necessary now, and more staff will be necessary in the short-term future. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City should continue to document its requirements and follow up via the annual consular package and MPP.

OIG found that Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City must improve consular operating policy and functional coordination. Although differences are relatively minor at this point, they clearly exist. Divergences involve internal practices, workflow, training issues, and public perceptions. Better coordination would help forestall claims that it is “easier” to get a visa in Hanoi or rumors that Americans are treated better in Ho Chi Minh City, for example. OIG advocated techniques including development of country-specific, written consular standard operating procedures and the dovetailing of each consular section’s formal outreach, representation, and reporting programs to close the gap. In comparable situations, often the senior in-country consular officer is designated as consular coordinator. The senior officer receives discrete funding and personnel resources to institute and manage common approaches and methodologies. Other missions’ experience in sustaining consistent countrywide consular activity offers potential signposts.

Recommendation 5: Embassy Hanoi should select and provide resources to a consular coordinator charged with harmonization of Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City’s consular activities. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

CONSULAR POLICY ISSUES

Adoptions

American citizens using intercountry procedures adopted approximately 700 Vietnamese orphans per year until 2002. Adoption fraud, baby selling, and corruption ran rampant in these undertakings. With U.S. government support, the government of Vietnam suspended intercountry adoptions on December 31, 2002. Government of Vietnam Decree 68 effectively defers intercountry adoptions pending negotiation of a bilateral agreement. In seeking such a pact, the U.S. government experienced drawn out and difficult negotiations, with progress and even clarity on

points of contention elusive. Hanoi's consular chief uses about half of her time monitoring and reporting on this matter. After much unstinting effort, it appears that an agreement may be reached by mid-year 2005.

Consular District

Consular districts are geographic descriptions of areas wherein consular officers have personal jurisdiction. The government of Vietnam currently recognizes the consular district of all consulates in Ho Chi Minh City to be simply Ho Chi Minh City and its environs. The government of Vietnam thus interprets Embassy Hanoi's consular district as the entire country, with Embassy Hanoi responsible for consular services throughout Vietnam except Ho Chi Minh City. The U.S. government defines Embassy Hanoi's consular district as roughly the northern half of Vietnam and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's district as the southern half of the country.

Vietnamese authorities occasionally stop, question, or detain Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City staff serving their consular district when they travel in southern Vietnam outside Ho Chi Minh City and its environs - particularly in the Central Highlands. The mission doggedly seeks redefinition of the government of Vietnam's consular district concept to conform to the U.S. government's position and has done so for the past seven years. The government of Vietnam stated it conducted interagency meetings to draft amendments for a new law allowing for expanded districts. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, all government of Vietnam Ministries and agencies agree, but Provincial authorities continue to oppose the change. OIG made an informal recommendation to address this.

Access and Notification

Consular access to American citizen prisoners is slow and convoluted, usually not complying with the 1994 Agreed Minute on Consular Relations stipulations. Timely arrest notification is rare, particularly for Americans of Vietnamese origin. Consular officers usually learn of an arrest from the detainees' family members or associates long before formal notification occurs. Notification may occur weeks or even months after the arrest. Visit requests must be made by a diplomatic note and can require at least three months for approval. Conversations generally must be in Vietnamese, are monitored by prison guards, and cannot stray from a set agenda. Sometimes when prisoners write letters to the consul they are not delivered. Last year, three Americans of Vietnamese origin were forcefully detained by authorities (in scenarios which resembled terrorist abductions) and questioned at length about

membership in political organizations. The Americans said they were held in empty houses and reported abuses such as sleep deprivation, shoving, and punching. All asserted they were forced to sign “confessions” and were strongly warned not to report any of the events to the U.S. government.

Arrests usually fall under the purview of the Ministry of Public Security. The Ministry of Public Security sees the 1994 Agreed Minute on Consular Relations as an agreement between the Department of State and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As such, they opine it does not apply to their (police) agents. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not in a position to force the Ministry of Public Security to comply with the Minute. Recently the mission learned that the legal office in the Bureau of Consular Affairs considers the Agreed Minute “to be a ‘political’ agreement rather than a binding international obligation; we consider the international legal source of U.S./Vietnam consular obligations to be the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.”

Visa Clearance Issues

American regulatory requirements to obtain specific clearance before issuing visas to current or former mid- or high-ranking Vietnamese officials cause delays and upset for Vietnamese leaders. Although the mission fully supports and implements regulatory measures to protect the United States and her interests, it finds these clearance prerequisites outdated. Because the requirements deter, hinder, and frustrate official Vietnamese travelers, they often undermine U.S. government-sponsored programs.

Repatriation of Deportable Convicts

Numerous Vietnamese citizens convicted of crimes in America entered the United States 20 or more years ago. As noncitizens, American law stipulates their deportation to Vietnam on completion of their sentences. The government of Vietnam refuses to accept such people because it believes they betrayed Vietnam by leaving the country, and their criminal behavior stems from exposure to American society. Though negotiations have been ongoing for 10 years, the government of Vietnam refuses to allow such individuals to return. The government of Vietnam has informed the embassy that it will readmit Vietnamese citizen convicts who entered the United States after normalization of relations. No test situations have yet occurred.

CONSULAR FUNCTIONAL TOPICS

American Citizens Services

Nearly 180,000 American citizens visit Vietnam annually. About 500 American citizens who live in the Hanoi consular district registered with the American citizens services (ACS) unit in Hanoi. About 600 American citizens, including minor children, resident in Ho Chi Minh City's consular district enrolled with ACS there. The consular chiefs estimate that upwards of 1,600 additional Americans live in Vietnam. In FY 2004, ACS Hanoi adjudicated about 150 citizenship/passport requests and performed about 200 notarial services. During the same period, ACS Ho Chi Minh City processed about 1,600 citizenship/passport requests and executed about 2250 notarials. Americans in Vietnam may encounter problems ranging from minor difficulty to serious crises. To help resolve such matters, both ACS units maintain working relationships with Vietnamese authorities. The mission's well-organized warden system meets requirements to orchestrate effective emergency safety and/or evacuation plans for Americans.

Visas

Embassy Hanoi's consular section provides nonimmigrant visa services (NIV) only. Besides NIV requests, Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City evaluates all immigrant and related visa applications made in Vietnam. Careful judgment of visa candidates in compliance with all pertinent laws and regulations protects U.S. borders by identifying and excluding terrorists, curbing illegal immigration, and sustaining bona fide travel to the United States.

Nonimmigrant Visas

Hanoi adjudicated nearly 5,500 NIV requests in FY 2004 and about 42,000 people applied for NIVs at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City during the same time. Estimates for FY 2005 project a slight overall increase. Roughly 55 percent of Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's first time visitor visa applicants do not qualify for visas. OIG found the NIV units uphold U.S. laws and regulations while providing courteous, efficient service. A bank, which collects machine-readable visa fees off-site, schedules NIV interviews. Both sections return issued NIVs on the afternoon following the interview.

Immigrant Visas

Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City has the sixth largest IV unit and the first ranking K1 fiancé(e) visa adjudication unit worldwide. Succeeding the former orderly departure program based in Bangkok, the IV unit in Ho Chi Minh City acts on all IV applications in Vietnam, including K1 fiancé(e) visas. It also maintains all orderly departure program records. In 2004, the unit evaluated 19,391 immigrant and K1/K3 fiancé(e) petitions for some 31,130 visa applicants. The number of K1 fiancé (e) applications continues to rapidly increase, from roughly 2,390 in 2000 to 7,480 in 2004. Greater visa activity in Ho Chi Minh City, compared with Hanoi, helps explain why more fraud is found in the Ho Chi Minh City district.



Ho Chi Minh City Consular

Fraud is a critical problem, particularly among fiancé(e) and E3 (third-preference employment) applicants. As a result, increasing numbers of these applications and related petitions must be returned to the Department of Homeland Security's, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services bureau with recommendations for revocation. The unit sent almost 1,100 cases for revocation in 2004.

The IV unit now works at full capacity with decent morale generating a valuable product. It has reached its limit. There is no time for training, reporting, or similar activities; customer service and file maintenance are beginning to falter. Given the sustained increased rates of IV work, consular managers requested additional IV staff positions in its 2004 consular package and MPP submissions. OIG fully endorses this request.

The prospect of Vietnamese governmental change permitting foreigners to adopt Vietnamese orphans appears imminent. Based on past experience under less time consuming and stringent conditions, as well as the unpredictable, highly emotional circumstances involved in intercountry adoptions, the IV unit must anticipate and request resources necessary to perform this work now. OIG urged consular management to formalize its plans and seek essential personnel and workspace to accomplish this responsibility.

Fraud Prevention Unit

Endemic fraud ranks high on consular concerns in Vietnam. Hanoi's comparatively low fraud rate consumes relatively few consular resources. However, rampant deception caused the Department to designate Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City as a high fraud location. Ho Chi Minh City's fraud prevention unit (FPU) focuses on the problem. FPU taskings include authenticating family relationships, determining identity and citizenship, validating educational records, and substantiating work histories. IV unit referrals make up about 90 percent of FPU's workload with about 700 cases outstanding at the time of the inspection. FPU confirms fiancé(e) (e) visa scams in 85-90 percent of applications referred to it for investigation-some 350 cases in FY 2004. Constraints on probes outside Ho Chi Minh City include harassment by local officials and the government of Vietnam's position. The inspection revealed a good working relationship between the consular antifraud and the regional security offices. The regional security officer stated that personnel limitations in his section inhibited its ability to work with the FPU. OIG found that the mission does not precisely count antifraud work in consular package statistics and suggested ways to improve tracking and reporting it.

Information Unit

Embassy Hanoi's consular staff fields four Congressional inquiries, approximately 700 telephone calls, and 300 fax, post, and e-mail questions each month as part of their usual tasks. In Ho Chi Minh City, consular workers operate an information unit to manage the consular information process. They respond to about 150 Congressional queries, some 4,700 telephone calls, 5,500 walk-in inquiries, and 3,000 fax, post, and e-mail questions each month. The unit coordinates consular outreach activity to provide accurate information on general consular topics and processing issues. In addition to correspondence, the unit provides information through the web site, waiting room videos, and Vietnamese media. The unit's question-and-answer column in the Ho Chi Minh City newspaper responds to readers' questions regarding U.S. consular issues.

Amerasians

The Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1987 authorizes Vietnamese persons fathered by American citizens between 1962 and 1975 to reside in the United States. This Congressionally mandated program resulted in the movement of about 87,000 persons to the United States from 1987 through 2002. The Department sited responsibility for the program at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City. The

program was suspended in early 2003, due to fraud concerns. In January 2005, the program recommenced after a two year hiatus with about 520 claims being made. Some of these applications were previously approved, but the Amerasian beneficiary did not complete the process. Recent Department guidance establishes three criteria for consular officers to evaluate program candidates: physical appearance, credible story, and documentation or evidence of an American father.

Fraudulent claims continue to blight the program, according to staffers. Since January 2005, most applicants have either no physical resemblance to persons of Caucasian, African-American, or Hispanic heritage, or their physical appearance can be attributed to their Vietnamese ethnic minority heritage. Cases involving cosmetic alteration also exist. Few applicants have records of a claimed American father and what documentary evidence is available usually proves forged or disproves an applicant's story. Nonetheless, persons familiar with this program believe that numbers of additional potential beneficiaries exist. Administering the program becomes increasingly difficult given ambiguous criteria definition and the passage of time. Ultimately, closure of this program will require Congressional action.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff*	Local-Hire Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY-2004 U.S. \$000	Total Funding FY-2005 U.S.\$000
OBO	1	0	1	3.5	3.3
State - Program	70	71	141	3.3	3.0
International Cooperative Administrative Support Services - ICASS	30	160	190	3.6	3.8
International Cooperative Administrative Support Services - ICASS-OBO	0	0	0	1.1	1.1
International Cooperative Administrative Support Services - ICASS-LGP	0	72	72	.5	.4
Representation				.08	.08
DS	8	70	78	.4	.6
Public Affairs	4	17	21	.5	.6
Refugee Resettlement	1	2	3	.6	.6
Machine Readable Visa	2	1	3	.2	.4
TOTAL STATE	116	393	509	\$13.78	\$13.9
Other Agencies					
USAID**	5	11	16	14.1	22.0
Foreign Agricultural Service	1	7	8	.3	.3
Foreign Commercial Service	4	23	27	.7	.6
Department of Homeland Security	3	4	7	.4	.3
Centers for Disease Control	3	16	19	6.4	5.3
DAO	5	3	8	.3	.3
Drug Enforcement Administration	3	3	6	.1	.1
Joint Public Advisory Committee	7	18	25	.8	.9
Total Other Agencies	31	85	116	\$23.1	\$29.8
Mission Totals	147	478	625	\$36.9	\$43.68

*Includes Part Time Intermittent Temporary and Personal Services Contracts

**USAID Operating Yearly Budget for both programs and staff

Data provided by Embassy Hanoi

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

Administrative operations, based on OIG's review of documentation, interviews conducted, and the results of the workplace and quality of life questionnaires, show significant improvement in virtually all areas with the arrival of the management counselor, the human resources officer, and financial management officer in summer 2004. To a lesser extent, OIG found the same to be true in Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City. The management section can be proud of this achievement and should be commended. However, there are still issues, particularly those involving real property and some human resource issues such as equality in the workplace for FSNs, and position classification in Ho Chi Minh City, that the management counselor and his staff will have to resolve.

REAL PROPERTY



Hanoi Chancery

The primary real property issue in Hanoi is the replacement of the inadequate chancery building with a new embassy compound. In Hanoi there are three government-owned properties - the chancery, the Ambassador's residence, and a recreational center compound that houses an "American Club."

In addition, there are an office complex (the Rose Garden), a warehouse on short-term lease, and 41 short-term leased residences. In Ho Chi Minh City, the government-owned compound contains the consulate, an annex, a support facility, and a multipurpose room. Most warehousing has been moved to another government-owned site. The consul general's residence and 24 other residences are on short-term lease. Annual lease costs for these properties are estimated at \$3 million.

The New Embassy Compound

Both Embassy Hanoi and OBO have long realized that the present chancery is woefully inadequate and have been seeking an alternative site for the new embassy compound. For years, however, interest was only focused on acquisition of land

occupied under a no-cost agreement by the Russian Embassy. Despite considerable effort on the part of Embassy Hanoi and the government of Vietnam, negotiations have not succeeded, and there appears to be no hope of success, in the unforeseeable future. This situation is unsatisfactory. The government of Vietnam has proposed two alternative sites. One, a proposed diplomatic enclave, has neither infrastructure nor has any diplomatic entity located in Hanoi expressed an interest or willingness to move to the proposed area. The third area, Ciputra, is a three-phased joint Vietnamese-Indonesian venture. Phase one is already complete and contains residential housing

Plans for the next two phases include supermarkets and a multistory shopping mall. The government of Vietnam has offered a ten-acre site in the area designated for phase three.

OBO in a cable (State 061200, April 5, 2005) has offered to send a site survey team to Hanoi once they have received formal proposals, including asking prices, from the government of Vietnam stating that 10 acres are available for long term lease at both Ciputra and the diplomatic enclave. At the OBO briefing with OIG before the team's departure, OBO advised that they rejected the diplomatic enclave for many reasons. The current impasse seems to be over the government of Vietnam's reluctance to cite a lease price for a site until the site is selected. While the Department does not have much bargaining room, the disposal of the recreational compound (see above) could enhance OBO's negotiating position. OIG believes that there is only one realistic choice, Ciputra.

Lease Costs

Annual lease costs for virtually every residential lease in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City exceed OBO's cost standards and require a waiver from OBO. Several also exceed space standards. Documentation detailing the extent of negotiations and alternatives is relatively sparse particularly for those leases entered into by the former management team(s). Some lease costs such as the \$118,000 a year for the penthouse used as the DCM's residence are exorbitant, yet there is little documentation available to show the extent of negotiations or other properties considered and why they were rejected. OIG was advised that there were several other properties (villas) available at considerably lower cost in 2002 when the DCM residence was selected. These properties are now under lease by other diplomatic missions. The final justification (the original was rejected) submitted to OBO to approve the lease did not discuss all properties available and, as a result, did not accurately reflect cost savings that brought the lease costs down to the \$118,000 annual cost. Comparisons were only made with more expensive properties. This lease was recently renewed for an additional three years until 2008.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Hanoi should establish procedures to document fully lease negotiations and justifications and be prepared to terminate lease number S-320-FBO-0157 on the departure of the incumbent deputy chief of mission and obtain a more reasonably priced residence. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

The Recreational Center Compound

The centrally located recreational center houses an American Club that is little used by the official American community - its primary reason to exist. The Management Controls section of this report discusses the lack of internal controls, effective operations, support costs incurred by Embassy Hanoi, and the need to rely on membership by the local non-Vietnamese community. Security precautions do not exist. There are no security guards except when the embassy uses this site. Anyone who does not appear to be Asian has full access to the compound. The property is believed to be extremely valuable.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should obtain a current appraisal of the sale price of the Recreational Center Compound, obtain permission to sell the property, and place the property for sale. (Action: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with OBO)

HUMAN RESOURCES

The embassy opened for operations in 1995. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City in its present facility opened for operations in 1999. As a result, the FSNs at the embassy and consulate are relatively new with the longest service only in the neighborhood of 10 years in the embassy and seven years in the consulate. Despite some problems and concerns the FSN staff, particularly in Ho Chi Minh City, is motivated, extremely cooperative, skilled, and displays a willingness to learn. At the present time, morale is high. Problems to be addressed involve the inadequate implementation of the computer aided job evaluation (CAJE) system in Ho Chi Minh City and expansion and explanation of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies and practices as they pertain to the national workforce and expanded training opportunities. In addition, there is a perceived need to expand

health insurance coverage and verify the adequacy of the UN Development Programs wage survey.

Human resources office operations have improved dramatically as a result of the efforts of the current officer. Employees directly attributed the improvement to both the human resources officer and the management counselor who “are always willing to work with us to fix problems that have arisen during the last year,” as stated in a meeting with the FSN association board. Some employees who survived workplace abuse and threats by an American officer, who has since departed, no longer believe that “today will be their last.” (See Workplace and Quality of Life Issues below.) FSNs in Ho Chi Minh City also voiced satisfaction with the new American management. They believe that they are now part of the process and have a voice in consulate issues. They also appreciated the advice and guidance provided by the management officer and the American OMS in the reestablishment of a hitherto moribund FSN association.

Overall, the office has done an excellent job of establishing employee work requirements statements and collecting employee evaluations in a timely manner. The office takes considerable time and effort to inform supervisors and employees of the requirements and timelines for evaluations and work requirements. All were current at the time of the inspection.

The CAJE process was completed in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City and the results submitted to the Department. After review, the Department approved the CAJE recommended classifications. Overall, about 30 percent of the FSN workforce had their positions classified upward. However, the results in Ho Chi Minh City are questionable. An EFM who is no longer at post made most position evaluations. There were significant failures in the process that should have been employed. Most employees were not consulted, and required information about the process was not forthcoming from either the evaluator or supervisors.

Recommendation 8: Embassy Hanoi should evaluate the adequacy of the implementation of the computer aided job evaluation process at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Work Environment and Equality in the Workplace

The embassy and the consulate do not have an EEO program for FSNs. The Department’s policy (3 FAH-2 H-312 b (8)(b)) states that complaints should be

handled expeditiously and equitably and that the mission's grievance procedures should be well understood and operable. In addition, 3 FAH-2 H-312 b (8)(c) stipulates active support of EEO programs. Orientation programs for officers, staff, and FSNs need to be expanded to cover the work environment and equality. In addition, a section of the LES Handbook needs to be devoted to this issue. FSNs believe that EEO is limited to equal opportunity in hiring.

Considerable improvement in the working environment for FSNs has taken place with the arrival of the current Ambassador and, as previously mentioned, the management counselor and human resources officer. The work environment for FSNs in the recent past, as described, revealed a level of insensitivity that amounted to a hostile work environment in some sections. OIG was told about abusive treatment by some former supervisors. Retribution and retaliation were perceived in some instances, and threats of dismissal and retribution were perceived as the norm. OIG received accounts of verbal and attitudinal abuse by some supervisors. Also FSNs, in their responses to OIG questionnaires, said that they believed EEO policies are not applicable to them. EEO policies and enforcement need to emanate from, and be endorsed by, mission management in the form of an official notice. The latest notice addressing EEO needed considerable clarification, particularly addressing the practices and policies as they pertain to FSNs.

Recommendation 9: Embassy Hanoi should expand the orientation program for officers, staff, and Foreign Service nationals, to include required Equal Employment Opportunity training and emphasis on the responsibilities of, and protections available to, employees with respect to maintaining a proper work environment and ensuring equality in the workplace. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 10: Embassy Hanoi should formally publish a post policy explaining the Equal Employment Opportunity program for national employees and provide a full discussion in the Locally Employed Staff Handbook. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Training

Some employees have not had training relevant to their primary duties. Some have not received training in their specialties for almost five years. The process

used to schedule employees for training needs improvement and explanation. The LES handbook calls for an annual training assessment to be submitted with the employee's annual Performance Evaluation Report. Employees believe that they are not to apply for needed training. They believe that their supervisor determines who will receive training and applies for them. Perceptions of both favoritism and abuse abound. The Ambassador has called for a comprehensive training plan; OIG supports this initiative. An informal recommendation was made to clarify the training application process.

Health Insurance

The present health insurance plan for FSNs provides coverage for employees only. Family members are not covered. Employees said that medical care for those without insurance coverage is less than adequate in terms of both care and facilities available. In order to provide coverage, a co-pay by employees of about \$160.00 a year for each dependent would be required. The employee community is divided between those who want and could pay for the coverage and those who want the coverage but cannot afford the additional cost. The embassy is encouraging the FSN community to reach a consensus before pursuing any change in the health insurance contract.

The Wage Survey

The 2004 wage survey did not result in salary increases for FSNs. Employees question the results because inflation is almost 10 percent, food prices rose over 13 percent, and employees at some comparator organizations received increases of about 10 percent. In addition, living costs in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City are higher than those in the rest of the country. Although embassy management has met several times with employee organizations in both the embassy and the consulate, employees are still not sure that they have received a satisfactory explanation of how the results of the survey were applied or even how the survey was conducted. The perception is that the process is not as transparent as they understood it would be. Embassy management continues to offer to meet with the FSNs to again attempt to clarify the survey process.

Recommendation 11: Embassy Hanoi should evaluate the results of the 2004 wage survey, recommend corrections to the Department, if necessary, and fully explain the survey process to the locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

GENERAL SERVICES

The general services office (GSO) provides good services to the embassy as evidenced by the scores on the OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaires and comments received. General services operations in Hanoi are led by an experienced supervisory general services officer who is supported by an assistant GSO, two EFMs a facilities maintenance manager, two assistants, and a maintenance technician, plus 22 LES. In Ho Chi Minh City, a first tour GSO supervises one facilities maintenance manager and 18 LES. Scores in virtually all areas of GSO operations were well above average.

Measurable improvements have been made in both locations. The morale of the staff in Hanoi has rebounded with the departure of the former supervisory GSO. Controls over procurement operations have been strengthened, as well as controls over both expendable and nonexpendable property. The controls over both expendable and nonexpendable property were virtually nonexistent in Hanoi until 2002 (seven years after the embassy opened for business) when the first physical inventory was attempted. The results were not good, and variances far exceeded acceptable norms. Implementation of required procedures resulted in the current physical inventory being accurate and variances within acceptable norms. Controls over nonexpendable supplies, as discussed in the management controls section, require strengthening.

SAFETY

The Department's safety, health, and environmental management program is codified in a number of laws and regulations and formally spelled out in 6 FAM 610. The goal of a safe working environment appears to receive sufficient management attention, and those charged with implementing the program carry out their duties on a regular and continuing basis. Assessment of the program's elements was straightforward and carried out in the course of interviews and review of program documentation.

The facilities maintenance specialist, acting in his capacity as post occupational safety and health officer, along with his assistant, were in the final stages of conducting annual office safety inspections. The inspection results, documented on their inspection sheets, indicated that all areas of the embassy were reviewed and that all elements of a good safety programs, to include hazards associated with fire, chemicals, noise, equipment, and maintenance activities, were attended to. Fur-

ther, review of personal questionnaires revealed that mission personnel looked favorably on their personal safety. Safety, health, and environmental management program committee meeting minutes indicated good attendance, including by the DCM, and discussion of relevant information.

One area of concern raised was slow support for the fire prevention program. The post had requested a number of signs and other equipment after a fire inspection. Receipt of the materials was taking what seemed an inordinate amount of time. An e-mail exchange with the responsible program elements in Washington indicated that post's concerns were somewhat justified in that logistical support for overseas posts could take four months to bear fruit. However, OBO is hiring a person to dedicate to that function and has set for itself the goal of cutting that support time to 30 days by the end of the year. OIG will be interested to note in future inspections whether that goal is attained.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CENTER

Overall, the financial management center in Hanoi provides excellent service to its clients. Both the ICASS customer satisfaction survey and OIG questionnaires rated the financial services high. The section is adequately staffed with one American officer and 11 experienced LES. The financial management center successfully coordinates and communicates with staff located in Ho Chi Minh City. Cashier operations are outstanding.

International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

The ICASS council in Vietnam is comprised of 19 subscribers from nine U.S. government agencies. The council meets every quarter with most entities actively participating. Last December, the ICASS council surveyed its customers and the overall satisfaction was high with the exception of the community liaison office (CLO) coordinator in Ho Chi Minh City. The Ho Chi Minh City CLO also received low scores on OIG's questionnaires.

During the inspection, the council was in the process of updating its service agreements and standards. The charter and memorandum of understanding with the service provider have not been updated since 2001. An informal recommendation was made to update these documents.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY

Embassy Hanoi's information management office currently meets the information technology needs of 178 users at multiple locations (chancery, Rose Garden Annex, and GSO warehouse) and provides the appropriate level of information technology security. However, top information management attention must focus on the infrastructure issues of staffing, software, documentation including policies and procedures, patch management, the use of information technology, and web sites.

The functional management questionnaire completed by the embassy presents a better picture of post operations than is justified although the post has actively tried to come into compliance with Department policies and procedures for information management. The lack of depth in the management section required the information management officer, a respected officer, to assume duties in other management areas resulting in inadequate attention and focus on implementing and institutionalizing necessary information management policies and procedures. The lack of depth in the information management section itself is exacerbated by staffing gaps. OIG left informal recommendations to address improvements in post office operations including training and equipment.

Staffing

The information management function is staffed with an information management officer and an information systems officer who manages the Sensitive But Unclassified network with two LES. Four LES positions are authorized. There is also a telephone technician who occasionally provides the regional information management center communications support. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City is staffed with an information programs officer, two first-tour specialists, and three LES to manage the Sensitive But Unclassified network.

The Sensitive But Unclassified network is the backbone of embassy operations. It is used by all infrastructure components to convey directions, track results, and portray American views to the public. Consequently, it must be appropriately staffed at all times. During periods of staffing gaps, the previous management officer requested that the telephone technician provide information management support for the networks - an area for which he has no training. One solution would be to reprogram the current telephone technician position to an information management specialist position and assign that position to the information systems office.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and the Bureau of Human Resources, should request that the current telephone technician position be reprogrammed to an information management specialist position within the information systems office. (Action: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with EAP and DGHR)

Software Issues

The locally developed application to track requests for assistance with information technology does not provide management the types of reports necessary to identify if there are recurring problems and determine the most effective use of limited resources. The Department has an application called the universal trouble ticket, which is available to the post. This type of software would help the information management officer document system trends, manage and prioritize staff workload, and provide status reports to post management.

The local change control board (CCB) has not approved all non-Department software that is resident on the Embassy or Consulate General's networks as required by 5 FAM 860. The PAS purchased software for tracking contacts that was not approved by the information management office or the local CCB. In addition, there are several applications identified in the April 2005 regional computer security officer report that the local CCB has not approved. The local CCB ensures that all locally approved software and hardware functions inside the local network and does not adversely affect the network. Furthermore, Embassy Hanoi has not notified the Department's CCB and has not requested certification and accreditation for these applications. OIG made informal recommendations to address these weaknesses.

Documentation

Post management cannot approve the current contingency and site security plans for the SBU and classified networks because these plans need additional work. Additionally, the contingency plans have not been coordinated with the emergency action plan as required by 12 FAM 620 and 12 FAM 630. The configuration management plan contains errors and inaccurate definitions of processes. For example, the SBU contingency plan does not address the multiple sites where processing is occurring nor does the plan identify the contact persons associated with the prioritized applications. Embassy Hanoi has not considered Ho Chi Minh

Inappropriate Use of Government Equipment

OIG reviews at Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City identified inappropriate material stored on the data servers. The material included chain letters, audio files, video files, an excessive number of personal files, and other inappropriate material. Additional review showed that some individuals inherited these files from previous incumbents of the positions. Because the post has established files that can be shared among the personnel in a section, there is no reason why individuals should inherit someone else's folder.

Recommendation 14: Embassy Hanoi should include transfer of official documents to shared folders and deletion of all other files as part of the checkout process. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Ineffective Implementation of Technology

The public affairs section and the protocol section maintain individual databases to track contacts. Several issues need to be addressed. The protocol section uses the Department-developed contact database application in which only the protocol assistant can input or modify data. The public affairs section uses several different software applications to track contacts. The use of multiple databases that contain similar data and the synchronization of those databases result in additional costs to the post. OIG made an informal recommendation to address this issue.

Web Sites: External and Internal

Mission Vietnam has two Internet sites: Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The public affairs sections - primarily the IRC personnel - maintain these sites that present the mission's face to the world. The information management office maintains the embassy Intranet page. The web sites contain erroneous, incorrect, and outdated information. For example, Embassy Hanoi's site contained misspelled words, incorrect descriptions of offices, and grammatically incorrect narrative. All web sites are to comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. These issues are addressed as informal recommendations.

Technical Training

Some post information technology staff have received no training on the current platform, which is Windows 2000 using Active Directory. Reasons range from lack of funding to lack of time. The complexity of deployed systems is not conducive to learning through trial-and-error - formal training is necessary. The Department through the School of Advanced Information Technology has on-line technical courses and courses on-site at regional training centers and in Washington.

Recommendation 15: Embassy Hanoi should develop training plans, including times of training and funding sources, for all information management personnel. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Another option for on-the-job training would be for Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City to exchange personnel for limited periods of time to allow them to maintain their skill sets and to stay competitive in their field. An informal recommendation addresses providing Ho Chi Minh City personnel experience in managing classified operations.

Information Technology Security

The overall information technology security stance of the embassy is satisfactory. Embassy Hanoi requested that the regional computer security officer perform an assessment of their operations in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City prior to the inspection. This assessment included a review of the administrative, physical, personnel, and technical controls for the information systems at post. Some weaknesses were corrected during the review, some weaknesses were corrected immediately after the review, and some still exist. OIG made informal recommendations to correct these deficiencies.

QUALITY OF LIFE

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICES

Both the embassy and consulate general have CLO coordinators. In Hanoi mission personnel rated the CLO highest on an OIG workplace and quality of life questionnaire. Such a high score for the CLO function is an achievement for the coordinator showing continuing attention to embassy needs. The CLO coordinator worked 40 hours a week and wrote a weekly newsletter along with other duties. The CLO coordinator is currently pursuing the establishment of a bilateral work agreement with the host government to expand employment opportunities for family members. The Ambassador has encouraged officers to volunteer as sponsors for new arrivals by making announcements at country team meetings. The results have been excellent.

Perceptions of CLO operations in Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City were decidedly different. American employees rated CLO services low on the OIG workplace and quality of life questionnaires. The consulate general had one half-time CLO who resigned in late May 2005. The ICASS council has approved filling it and a second half-time position to expand services. Although there is no bilateral employment agreement with the host government, three spouses have obtained jobs outside the consulate general.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND THE FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Embassy Hanoi

Two EEO coordinators are responsible for the mission program. Neither has had training. Both rely on the Department's web site for information. Bulletin boards do not contain notices with the coordinators names or adequate current information. There is no information regarding FSNs' EEO rights (see workplace

and quality of life issues in the Resource Management section of this report). The embassy also has designated a Federal Women's Program coordinator, who has not had training or received any materials. She goes to the Department's web site for information and circulates notices received from the Department by e-mail. Notices are not posted on bulletin boards. OIG made informal recommendations to address EEO and women's issues.

Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City

American employees rated EEO workplace sensitivities favorably among the top categories of embassy services on their workplace and quality of life questionnaires. The EEO coordinator stated that only one employee registered a complaint or sought counseling during the past year. The coordinator has recently obtained materials from the Department to inform the FSN staff of their rights, and she plans to publicize and distribute the information. She had an EEO course in Washington.

The newly appointed Federal Women's Program Coordinator had not received training or materials relating to her responsibilities. The coordinator stated that no one has sought her assistance with program issues. OIG informally recommended that the coordinator receive appropriate training.

MEDICAL UNITS

Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City established health units relatively recently. Both offer first aid for all staffers as well as medical counseling, referrals, and supervision of outpatient care for mission Americans. Medical specialists are available on call. Each unit arranges one or two medical evacuations a month to help ensure that employees obtain satisfactory care outside Vietnam. The units coordinate and clear all critical medical decisions with regional medical officers.

The medical units have adequate well-organized space. Arrangements protect patient privacy. OIG review confirmed that each unit competently safeguards patient records and controlled medical supplies, properly keeping stocks on hand in secure rooms and containers. Employees, who described the medical units as significant positive morale factors, ranked the units in the top 10 percent on their workplace and quality of life questionnaires, an evaluation with which OIG agrees.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The Chief of Mission certification submitted July 20, 2004, prepared by the former management team and signed by the former Chief of Mission, mistakenly stated that there were reasonable assurances that management control objectives were achieved and did not highlight any material weaknesses. Although management controls over consular operations were satisfactory, significant weaknesses existed including a lack of control over expendable and nonexpendable supplies and equipment, as well as improper registration of motor vehicles. In the past year improvements have been made in controls over expendable and nonexpendable supplies in Hanoi, but weaknesses continued to exist in Ho Chi Minh City. Weaknesses also continue to exist in motor pool management as well as oversight of landlord compliance, proper documentation of representational costs, the operations of the American club, and oversight of grants provided to the UN International School.

GENERAL SERVICES

Nonexpendable Property - Ho Chi Minh City

Controls of nonexpendable property were weak. There were significant differences between recorded quantities and those actually on hand in the warehouse. Transactions including receipts, issues, and disposal were not recorded because of unresolved problems with the nonexpendable property application system.

Recommendation 16: Embassy Hanoi should correct nonexpendable property systems problems and make inventory records current at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Landlord Compliance - Ho Chi Minh City

Included in the terms of the lease for the consul general's residence signed September 14, 2005, was a provision that the rental rate would include about

\$30,000 of make-readies. Although some designated improvements have been made, the landlord has not been required to document costs incurred. Thus, there is no assurance that the lease provisions have been respected.

Recommendation 17: Embassy Hanoi should obtain documentation of costs incurred by the landlord (lease number S-320-FBO-0227) for required make-readies for Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Motor Pool

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In late April 2005 the Office of Foreign Missions contacted the supervisory GSO regarding the motor vehicle policy in Vietnam. The Office of Foreign Missions requested the post to fill out the motor vehicle reciprocity survey if they were dissatisfied with the current policy. The post submitted the survey to the office on May 16, 2005.

Management controls over motor pool operations are not sufficient. There is no written designation of a country fleet manager as required by 14 FAM 418.1-1 (D). Currently, the motor pools at the embassy and consulate general operate independently. There are no missionwide policies to follow.

Recommendation 19: Embassy Hanoi should designate a country fleet manager responsible for mission-wide management of vehicles as required by regulations. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Over \$45,000 a year is spent for fuel throughout the country. The mission has not established adequate controls to ensure proper use of fuel. The Foreign Affairs Handbook (14 FAH-1 H 814.2-1) requires the preparation of the Monthly Fuel Consumption Record Form DS-1775 to establish mileage standards for each vehicle. However, vehicle use and fuel consumption reports are not being reviewed to determine whether consumption is excessive. One vehicle was actually shown as getting less than one mile per gallon.

Recommendation 20: Embassy Hanoi should prepare and analyze monthly fuel consumption reports. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Representation

Vouchers for representational expenses are being paid without proper information and/or documentation as required by section 341 of the standardized regulations. For example, most voucher forms were incomplete while others did not include attending guest lists. For events including staff on per diem, the appropriate rate was not used to deduct the meal allowance from the travelers' voucher. Moreover, several vouchers for lunches did not include any information as to the purpose of the meeting. The regulations require vouchers to include type, purpose, and location of function, a guest list, a brief description of the official business conducted, and receipts.

Recommendation 21: Embassy Hanoi should require submission of complete representational expenses vouchers prior to payment. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Telephone Use

The mission is allowing personnel to make personal long distance calls from office and cellular telephones without using a personal calling card. According to Department Notice 2004 04 043, occasional personal long-distance calls are authorized provided a personal calling card is used and the call does not interfere with work. Every month, the financial management office sends the telephone bills to every office to determine the number of personal long distance calls to be billed to the individual users. Even though most people pay their bill as soon as it is received, some accounts remain outstanding for several months. Department Notice 2004 04 043 states that employees must not make long-distance calls with the intent to later reimburse the U.S. government. In order to comply with regulations while OIG was at post, the embassy issued an administrative notice to all mission employees instructing them to use personal calling cards when making personal long distance calls from official phones.

School Grants

In the past two years, the (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6) has received four grants from the Office of Overseas Schools. Management of the grants by the school has not been very efficient. At the time of the inspection, very few invoices had been submitted for payment. In addition, the school is not submitting reports required by the regulations. OIG informally recommended that the embassy require timely submission of invoices and reporting requirements from the school's administration.

Official Residence Expenses

The Ho Chi Minh City principal officer submitted, and the post paid, separate charges for staff lunches for his employees. The household staff contract does not require the separate payment of meals nor is it in accordance with local law. According to 3 FAM 3251.3 and section 411 of the standardized regulations, only expenses that are required in accordance with local law or custom can be provided

by the principal representative in addition to wages. An informal recommendation was made for the post to initiate collection action for the incorrect payment and disallow the expenditure in the future.

AMERICAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The American Community Association was established in October 1995 to provide activities for the benefit and welfare of the embassy employees in Hanoi and their families. Its primary operation is the American Club located on U.S. government-owned property. In addition to free space, the embassy provides the association subsidies for utilities and minor repairs.

The association has not been profitable. For the year ending December 31, 2003, the association lost \$5,827, and for the year ending December 31, 2004, the loss was \$8,003. In the first few months of 2005, the association lost another \$1,082. The club is not generally used to any great extent by the official American community, rather it is open to all non-Vietnamese passport holders who pay membership fees. If not for these fees, the losses would be greater.

The American Community Association has not complied with the reporting requirements in 6 FAM 557. The submission of the required semiannual financial statements or audited financial statements for 2004 has not taken place. The audited financial statements due May 1, 2004, in Washington were not submitted until November 2004. Moreover, the association has not established internal controls over food and beverages consumption at the American Club. OIG has recommended in the Resource Management section of this report that the property on which the club is located be sold.

Recommendation 22: Embassy Hanoi should terminate the operations of the American Community Association following Department requirements. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

The American Community Association currently employs only Vietnamese staff. In 2003, a U.S. citizen was hired to manage the association. Even though governed by Department regulations, the American Community Association failed to withhold and report federal income taxes to the Internal Revenue Service during the term of the manager's employment. According to 6 FAM 556, "Employee associations are U.S. government instrumentalities for federal tax purposes. These

requirements apply only to U.S. citizen employees of the association and to U.S. resident alien employees temporarily located outside the United States. Therefore, the employee association is subject to employer taxes under 26 U.S.C. 3121, and to withholding requirements under 26 U.S.C. 3404.”

Recommendation 23: Embassy Hanoi should instruct the American Community Association to report to the Internal Revenue Service the failure to withhold federal income taxes for its U.S. citizen employee and provide all pertinent information. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Embassy Hanoi should create an additional locally employed position to assist with information advocacy in the public affairs section. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 2: Embassy Hanoi should ask for confirmation from the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs that the mission has the latest press and speaking guidance on Agent Orange, coordinate with the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the development of any additional guidance needed, and distribute the guidance widely throughout the mission. (Action: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with EAP)

Recommendation 3: Embassy Hanoi should move the information resource center into larger space more appropriate for carrying out its mission. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 4: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should relocate the public affairs section at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City to a site with sufficient space for programming activities and more readily accessible to the public. (Action: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 5: Embassy Hanoi should select and provide resources to a consular coordinator charged with harmonization of Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's consular activities. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 6: Embassy Hanoi should establish procedures to document fully lease negotiations and justifications and be prepared to terminate lease number S-320-FBO-0157 on the departure of the incumbent deputy chief of mission and obtain a more reasonably priced residence. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 7: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should obtain a current appraisal of the sale price of the Recreational Center Compound, obtain permission to sell the property, and place the property for sale. (Action: Embassy Hanoi, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 16: Embassy Hanoi should correct nonexpendable property systems problems and make inventory records current at Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 17: Embassy Hanoi should obtain documentation of costs incurred by the landlord (lease number S-320-FBO-0227) for required make-readies for Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 18:

Recommendation 19: Embassy Hanoi should designate a country fleet manager responsible for mission-wide management of vehicles as required by regulations. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 20: Embassy Hanoi should prepare and analyze monthly fuel consumption reports. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 21: Embassy Hanoi should require submission of complete representational expenses vouchers prior to payment. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 22: Embassy Hanoi should terminate the operations of the American Community Association following Department requirements. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

Recommendation 23: Embassy Hanoi should instruct the American Community Association to report to the Internal Revenue Service the failure to withhold federal income taxes for its U.S. citizen employee and provide all pertinent information. (Action: Embassy Hanoi)

INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal recommendations cover operational matters not requiring action by organizations outside the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau. Informal recommendations will not be subject to the OIG compliance process. However, any subsequent OIG inspection or on-site compliance review will assess the mission's progress in implementing the informal recommendations.

Executive Direction

The front office does not operate optimally. The DCM is not empowered to reduce the flood of paper to the Ambassador and is not getting around the mission as he should. Moreover, embassy personnel complain that the Ambassador's voluminous demand for written work and the uneven performance of the OMS staff add unnecessarily to work stress. Computer training might assist front office staff, but there is a clear need for a third staff position in the front office to coordinate paper flow and track the front office schedule. The planned recruitment of an EFM to serve as a staff assistant is a major step in the right direction.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Hanoi should devolve authority from the Ambassador to the deputy chief of mission for specific aspects of mission planning, management, and staff development, and facilitate the deputy chief of mission's more frequent presence throughout the mission in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Hanoi should review and reorganize front office operations by seeking a confidential, in-house review of how his style impacts on productivity.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Hanoi should train office management specialist staff as required in more effective use of computer software.

Economic Section

Embassy Hanoi did not hold a needed economic section offsite event to improve missionwide understanding and cooperation.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Hanoi should hold a missionwide economic section offsite and follow it up with programs designed to strengthen Foreign Service national relationships across agency, section, and post lines.

Public Diplomacy

Embassy Hanoi's public affairs section does not pay enough attention to relationships with the embassy front office. For example, a review of front office taskers reveals missed deadlines. More responsive, efficient service is essential to adequately support the Ambassador.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Hanoi should make greater use of written memorandums between the public affairs section and the front office to coordinate actions and requests and achieve better understanding.

Embassy Hanoi's public affairs section has urged everyone at post to participate in public diplomacy activities through e-mail and announcements at country team meetings. Too often however, opportunities are missed and coordination with other sections poor because officers do not think to involve public diplomacy in their work. By including a public diplomacy element in work requirements statements, officers will have more incentive for action and will demonstrate the front office's commitment.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Hanoi should add a public diplomacy element to mission officers' work requirements statements.

The Embassy Hanoi public affairs section uses four separate databases/systems for contacts management. One database accessible to the entire staff would be more efficient. Embassy Hanoi has already purchased the Bureau of Information Resource Management approved software. GoldMine is a sophisticated tool capable of manipulating data and providing many types of reports. However, the use of GoldMine is not self-evident and does require training.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Hanoi should install GoldMine on OpenNet+ for public affairs use and provide training on it for the section's staff.

Embassy Hanoi's public affairs section files are not maintained in compliance with Records Management Handbook standards.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Hanoi should review the public affairs section's filed materials, properly arrange them, and discard obsolete items.

Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's webmaster lacks sufficient skills for proper website design and management. Adequate training is vital for the employee to perform effectively his key outreach responsibilities.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Hanoi should provide appropriate training for the consulate general's webmaster.

Embassy Hanoi planned a public affairs section offsite event. This plan was not implemented.

Informal Recommendation 10: Mission Vietnam should hold a public affairs offsite event.

Consular Section

Some officers in Ho Chi Minh City expressed concern over "big picture" consular section direction and management. Organizational uncertainties in staffing and scheduling rotational assignments within and outside the consular section as well as operational issues were some of the concerns. The consular chief stated that he plans to improve section planning and organization.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy Hanoi should design and implement a plan to improve the direction and management of the consulate general.

The government of Vietnam interprets Embassy Hanoi's consular district as the entire country except Ho Chi Minh City (where Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City administrates). The U.S. government defines Embassy Hanoi's consular district as roughly the northern half of Vietnam and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's district as the southern half of the country. Vietnamese authorities interfere with Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City staff serving their consular district. The mission has pressed the government of Vietnam to recognize the U.S. government's position for years without success.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Hanoi should recommend courses of action to break the stalemate.

The DAO asked the ACS units in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to inform his office of particulars on any U.S. military personnel who visit the unit. This request stemmed from a requirement that military personnel must obtain clearance before travel to Vietnam. The embassy agreed to the DAO's request. Absence of a formal written policy on this issue leaves the ACS unit in questionable status regarding Privacy Act stipulations.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Hanoi should prepare a formal written policy on this subject and inform the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's consular files are not maintained in compliance with Records Management Handbook standards.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy Hanoi should review the consular section's filed materials, properly arrange them, and discard obsolete items.

Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's consular sections have few specific standard operating procedures.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy Hanoi should develop standard operating procedures for the consular sections using samples from the Office of Inspector General and regional embassies.

Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City have not visited each others facilities for work visits.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy Hanoi should arrange working visits between the consular sections in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to promote understanding of conditions at each section.

Information Technology

None of the post office staff ever received training.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy Hanoi should provide training for post office staff.

Embassy Hanoi's postal scale does not function properly.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy Hanoi should replace the postal scale.

The locally developed application to track requests for assistance with information technology does not provide management the types of reports necessary to identify if there are recurring problems and determine the most effective use of limited resources.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy Hanoi should replace the locally developed helpdesk applications with the Department application, Universal Trouble Ticket.

Embassy Hanoi does not have complete and accurate standard operating procedures.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy Hanoi should review and correct the current procedures and develop and document any missing procedures.

The local CCB has not approved several applications in the April 2005 regional computer security officer report that are already on the Hanoi system. Furthermore, the embassy has not notified the Department of these local applications.

Informal Recommendation 21: Embassy Hanoi should have the local change control board approve all nonbaseline software that is used on the systems in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

Locally developed applications have not been submitted to the Department for approval and certification and accreditation. These applications include a trouble ticket application (discussed above), a GSO vehicle request application, and a travel order request application.

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy Hanoi should remove locally developed applications from the system until the Department has approved them. If approved, the embassy should submit the applications for certification and accreditation.

The public affairs section purchased software for tracking contacts that was not approved by the information management office or the local CCB.

Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy Hanoi should approve the software and coordinate all future purchases through the information management office.

Embassy management cannot approve the contingency and site security plans because the plans contain errors and inaccurate descriptions of processes. Additionally, the contingency plan has not been coordinated with the emergency action plan as required by 12 FAM 600.

Informal Recommendation 24: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
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Informal Recommendation 25:

The public affairs section and the protocol section maintain individual databases to track contacts. One reason given for the use of multiple applications was an issue of who would control the input. Coordination between the public affairs section (including the IRC) and the information management office needs to be improved.

Informal Recommendation 26: Embassy Hanoi should select one database for contacts and establish multiple points of input with one person assigned for quality control and establish processes where information management is in the loop on all information technology issues.

Mission Vietnam has two Internet web sites: Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The web sites contain erroneous, incorrect, and outdated information. The information management office maintains the embassy Intranet page.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy Hanoi should establish procedures to ensure that information on mission web sites is current and correct, and require supervisory review and approval of contents.

All web sites are to comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Informal Recommendation 28: Embassy Hanoi should request that the Department review web sites for compliance and address deficiencies.

Two information management specialists support the classified network in Embassy Hanoi. The two first-tour specialists in Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City do not have experience on the classified network.

Informal Recommendation 29: The mission should provide Ho Chi Minh City personnel the opportunity to work on the classified system.

The regional computer security officer completed a computer security assessment of Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh's Sensitive But Unclassified and classified networks. Some weaknesses still exist.

Informal Recommendation 30: Embassy Hanoi should correct all weaknesses identified in the regional computer security officer's security assessment.

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Informal Recommendation 31:

Equal Employment Opportunity/Federal Women's Program

Embassy Hanoi bulletin boards do not contain notices with the Equal Employment Opportunity coordinators names or adequate current information. There is no information regarding FSNs' EEO rights.

Informal Recommendation 32: Embassy Hanoi should ensure that the Equal Employment Opportunity coordinators receive training and post current information concerning both Americans and Foreign Service nationals on bulletin boards at each embassy site.

Embassy Hanoi and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City have a designated a Federal Women's Program coordinator. Neither coordinator has had training or posted information on bulletin boards.

Informal Recommendation 33: Embassy Hanoi should ensure that the mission Federal Women's Program coordinators receive training and posts information on the program on mission bulletin boards.

Medical Unit

No record exists demonstrating that Embassy Hanoi's family advocacy program committee has formally met.

Informal Recommendation 34: Embassy Hanoi should have a meeting of the family advocacy program committee and prepare a formal record of its deliberations.

Embassy Hanoi's health unit staff report they are included in plans to relocate/resize their unit. They believe the regional medical officer, based on his experience and specialized knowledge, should be involved in the overall planning.

Informal Recommendation 35: Embassy Hanoi should engage the regional medical officer in planning the health unit move/relocation.

Management: International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

The post has not updated the ICASS charter and memorandum of understanding with the service provider since 2001.

Informal Recommendation 36: Embassy Hanoi should update the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services charter and memorandum of understanding with the service provider.

Management: Official Residence Expenses

The principal officer submitted, and the post paid, separate charges for staff lunches for his employees. According to 3 FAM 3251.3 and section 411 of the standardized regulations only expenses that are required in accordance with local law or custom can be provided by the principal representative in addition to wages.

Informal Recommendation 37: Embassy Hanoi should initiate collection action for the incorrect payment and disallow the expenditure in the future.

Management: School Grants

Management of the grants by the school has not been very efficient. At the time of the inspection, very few invoices had been submitted for payment. In addition, the school is not submitting the reports required by the regulations.

Informal Recommendation 38: Embassy Hanoi should require timely submission of invoices and reporting requirements from the school's administration.

Management: Training

Procedures for determining training requirements for FSNs, and the scheduling and provision of training are not clear. Training is perceived as a reward by supervisors to favored employees rather than as a requirement for job enhancement. Employees believed that supervisors applied for training for the employees rather than the employee making application.

Informal Recommendation 39: Embassy Hanoi should clarify the training application process.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	Michael W. Marine	09/04
Deputy Chief of Mission	John S. Boardman	07/04
Consul General Ho Chi Minh City	Seth D. Winnick	08/04
Chiefs of Sections:		
Administrative	Gregory S. Stanford	07/04
Consular	Jennifer L. Savage	07/02
Economic	Samuel R. Watson III	08/03
Political	Marc E. Knapper	07/04
Public Affairs	Louis Lantner	08/04
Regional Security Office	Christopher Amyes	07/03
Senior Advisor	William Aspell	08/04
Other Agencies:		
Agency for International Development	Dennis Zvinakis	06/04
Centers for Disease Control	Mitchell Wolfe	07/04
Defense Attaché Office	Stephen Ball	06/02
Department of Agriculture	John Wilson	07/04
Department of Commerce	Miguel Pardo de Zela	05/04
Department of Health and Human Services	Marie Haring Sweeney	10/03
Department of Homeland Security	Frederick Sell	04/00
Drug Enforcement Administration	Jeffrey Wanner	01/05
Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC)	Lentfort Mitchell	08/04

ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	American citizens services
CAJE	Computer aided job evaluation
CCB	Change control board
CLO	Community liaison officer
DAO	Defense attaché office
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DS	Bureau of Diplomatic Security
EAP	Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EFM	Eligible family member
FPU	Fraud prevention unit
FSN	Foreign Service national
GSO	General services office
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IRC	Information resource center
IV	Immigrant visas
LES	Locally employed staff
MPP	Mission Performance Plan
NIV	Nonimmigrant visas
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OMS	Office management specialist
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

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